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ESTABLISHMENT OR STRENGTHENING OF ILLEGAL APPARATS
BY FREE WORLD COMMUNIST PARTIES

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ESTABLISHMENT OR STRENGTHENING OF ILLEGAL APPARATS BY FREE WORLD COMMUNIST PARTIES

Preparations for the establishment of a clandestine Communist party organization or illegal apparat parallel to the party's legal overt organization have recently been reported in several Free World Communist parties.* There are also indications that legally operating Communist parties in countries where previous conditions of suppression prompted the establishment of illegal apparats are taking steps to strengthen their apparats. There is some evidence to show that the emphasis on illegal organization may go hand in hand with an increased effort by each Communist party to penetrate its country's police and military forces. Finally, there are indications that Communist parties

* It should be noted that clandestine activity in some form is always a part of the Communist party operations in a Free World country regardless of whether the party is legal or illegal. For example, a Communist party may set up a special clandestine mechanism or apparat to facilitate the channeling of funds. Such an apparat may or may not be illegal in the sense of being against the laws of the country, but is frequently referred to by the Communists themselves as an "illegal apparat". As used in this paper, the term "illegal apparat" refers to a clandestine party organization compartmented from the party's conventional organization, whose members are not generally known as Communists; whose primary purpose is the continuance of party operations under conditions of severe repression; and which may include organizational provision for violent action up to the level of paramilitary forces.

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in several countries have either established a capability for armed action, such as a paramilitary force, or demonstrated an interest in such a capability. Whether this capability is party and parcel of the existing (or planned, as the case may be) illegal organization or a compartmented mechanism of the party is as yet undetermined.

While this pattern has been observed primarily in legal parties, there are some indications that it also may apply to illegal CP's. In such a case there would be a move to improve and strengthen the illegal organization of the party and/or establish a paramilitary capability.

Evidence of the above trend has been observed in a number of Free World CP's. For many of these parties the pressure of local events made the question of establishing an illegal apparatus an immediate problem. However, the reported attention to illegal apparatus by those parties may be indicative of similar attention by other parties of the International Communist Movement (ICM).

Although a CP normally works with both overt and clandestine methods, it tends to stress one or the other based on local political conditions and the prevailing tactical line of the ICM. Since the 20th Party Congress of the CPSU in February 1956, the tactical line for the ICM has emphasized for the CP's in the Free World the employment of legal methods, coupled with the penetration, exploitation, and manipulation of nationalist and amenable leftist and trade union forces in a massive offensive.

There are indications that some CP's, particularly in Free World countries where political conditions are favorable to legal parliamentary tactics, emphasized legal means almost to the exclusion of clandestine operations. Other CP's with limited resources concentrated on the parliamentary struggle rather than disperse their limited resources. It

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is believed that this situation appeared deplorable to the CPSU, which foresaw its offensive tactics leading either to counterpressures forcing the CP's to go underground or to a situation favorable to a takeover by the CP. From the CP's viewpoint, under these conditions, an illegal apparatus or clandestine organization paralleling and compartmented from the overt party would be considered essential; in the case of impending illegality to protect the party and in the case of a coup attempt to play a key role if required. The situation is also believed to have appeared unsatisfactory to the CPSU with respect to certain illegal parties which, long suppressed, had placed too great an emphasis upon purely clandestine agent operations, resulting in a consequent weakening of the illegal membership base of the Party. Accordingly, the CPSU appears to have decided to take necessary corrective measures.

The renewed emphasis on the establishment of illegal or parallel apparatuses by Communist parties in the Free World appears to have stemmed from the gathering of delegations from some sixty-five Communist parties at Moscow in November 1957 for the 40th anniversary celebration of the October Revolution. Stressing the importance of this gathering for the ICM, the Soviet press at that time commented that "there has been no event like it in the Communist movement for more than twenty years," an obvious comparison to the important Seventh (and last) World Congress of the Comintern held in 1935. The conclusions of the Moscow gathering were embodied in the Twelve Party Declaration which set the policy for the ICM. Significantly, this declaration restricted the "parliamentary road to Socialism" to "a number of capitalist countries" and stated that in case of resistance by reactionary forces, "the possibility of non-peaceful transition to Socialism should be borne in mind." Pursuant to this latter proviso, CPSU leaders secretly pointed out to representatives of the Free World Communist parties the advisability of establishing illegal or parallel apparatuses and increasing efforts to penetrate the security services. Some party leaders raised objections to establishing an illegal apparatus, and no firm agreement or

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policy binding on all parties appears to have been reached at that time. However, even these doubters concurred in the advisability of increasing efforts to penetrate the security services.

Following the November 1957 Moscow Conference, Soviet representatives are believed to have reiterated to a number of Communist parties the CPSU desire for the establishment of illegal apparats. Particular attention appears to have been given by these functionaries to the parties reluctant to undertake this action. That the CPSU achieved some success in its over-all efforts is indicated by the fact that during 1958 certain Free World CP's were reported in varying stages of establishing or strengthening illegal apparats and/or preparing for paramilitary activities.

Subsequently, the CPSU used the occasion of its 21st Party Congress (held in Moscow from 27 January to 5 February 1959 and attended by some seventy-two CP delegations) to emphasize again to selected Free World Communist parties the necessity of establishing illegal apparats and developing a capability for armed action in case of need. Guidance on these points was given to representatives of certain Free World CP's attending the Congress by CPSU officials, including Khrushchev himself. Similar guidance was given by officials of the Communist Party of China (CPC) including MAO Tse-tung, to CP representatives from Latin America who visited Peiping after the 21st Congress of the CPSU.

In guidance to a number of European CP's Khrushchev is believed to have stated that a crucial period for the peace of the world was at hand and that the party's clandestine organization should be reviewed and strengthened in view of this grave prospect. He emphasized that a strong illegal apparat was vital because of the possibility of suppressive action against the CP's in the Free World.

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With respect to Communist parties in the Middle East and Far East, leading CPSU and CPC officials pointed out that recent military coups (as in Burma, Pakistan and Sudan) and the development of repressive anti-Communist policies by governments in these areas seriously threaten the survival of the CP's. One Middle Eastern Communist party and possibly others were admonished to meet this threat by developing apparats capable of armed resistance, or at least by building the cadre of an underground party. They were also instructed to intensify their efforts to penetrate their countries' military and police circles.

With respect to Latin America, CPC officials gave a detailed briefing on the necessity of establishing illegal apparats to the representatives of several Latin American Communist parties who visited Red China in February and March 1959 after the 21st CPSU Congress. This briefing was given in a context of encouraging the Latin American CP's to pursue the "national liberation struggle" which the Cuban revolution had shown could be successful in the imperialist rear. Although the CPC approved of the armed revolution which occurred in Cuba, it was recommended that elsewhere peaceful and legal tactics should be tried first. The time for armed struggle would be determined by the conditions of imperialist oppression rather than by the Communists' own decision. The Communist parties must be prepared for this eventuality, and therefore an illegal apparat functioning parallel to a legal or semi-legal Communist party must be established in each country. The important aspect according to CPC officials was not that a Communist party have large membership, but that it have an underground organization in reserve and protected.

The CPC officials emphasized that the knowledge of the existence of the illegal Communist party must be limited to members of the Central Committee of the legal CP, and better

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still, to only a few of them. The illegal CP should never surface, even if conditions of legality should permit. When part of the illegal CP or one of its members loses contact, by reason of investigation or repression, the "lost" unit or individual should join the overt, legal CP without even mentioning the illegal CP. The illegal CP should be organized in highly compartmented form to avoid destruction when part of it is discovered.

The CPC officials pointed out that the CPC used this system to advantage, especially in Shanghai, where without it the CPC could not have been so successful. They stated, moreover, that a truly clandestine Communist party operating alongside a legal CP is essential to avoid disaster brought about by total repression. In addition, the parallel illegal CP, apart from its normal tasks, is in a good position to obtain financial assistance from various sources for both the overt and covert CP organizations; and to facilitate the collection of information.

It appears that both the CPSU and the CPC agreed that the various CP's should operate legally, if possible, while holding an illegal apparatus in reserve for the defense of the party or for offensive action at the proper time. However, within the framework of increased fraternal liaison and assistance as sanctioned by the CPSU, the CPC, in its guidance and training of other CP's, has stressed clandestine work, citing in particular practical illustrations from the CPC's own successful rise to power. CPSU training of CP functionaries, on the other hand, has been, so far as known, of a more academic nature. There is also some evidence that the CPC in its guidance and training of other CP's is seeking to increase its influence and stature within the ICM by presenting its experiences as more up-to-date and pertinent for parties currently engaged in "national liberation struggles" than the experiences of any other Communist party. It appears

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that Latin American Communists in particular are becoming more inclined to regard the CPC as their guide to the revolution on the grounds that problems faced by the CPC are similar to those confronting Communists in Latin America, and that therefore the CPC experience has considerable applicability. Because clandestine work played such a large part in the CPC rise to power, more emphasis on illegal apparatus may thus be expected in those CP's susceptible to CPC influence.

In the reported cases of Communist parties establishing a clandestine party organization or improving an existing organization, the extent of progress varies from party to party. In some cases only initial preparations have been made to meet the possibility of the party being outlawed. Such preparations include arrangement for safekeeping of documents and valuable movable property, the establishment of secure communications channels, the designation of substitutes for well-known key personnel, and the training of selected personnel for the clandestine party. In other cases organizational preparations have progressed to the point where an underground cadre is in being with leaders selected and secret party members instructed and recruited. In some instances organizational measures have gone so far as to include the establishment of clandestine paramilitary groups or "shock troops", the acquisition and caching of arms, paramilitary training, and preparations for sabotage (including training in preparation of explosives and other sabotage techniques). However, as noted previously, the exact relationship between the paramilitary structure of a party and that party's illegal apparatus is not clear.

In certain cases selected secret CP members were designated to form an ostensibly non-Communist party to operate legally in the event the Communist party is outlawed. Use of a front party operating legally is, of course, an accepted Communist technique in countries where the CP is both illegal and suppressed.

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Personnel involved in the establishment of illegal apparats or paramilitary forces appear as a general rule to fall into one or more of the following categories.

a. Individuals known in the past to be representative of the group within the CP most inclined towards violent tactics.

b. Persons with past experience in illegal or paramilitary activities.

c. Persons holding Party positions which have historically been involved in the establishment of illegal apparats, (i.e.: Organization Secretary, Control Committee Chairman, Cadre Department head).

It is possible that training in the Bloc may also be a characteristic which could serve to identify persons concerned with illegal apparats. While this training, where known, is believed to have been primarily ideological, there is evidence to suggest that "experiences in clandestine work" and "experiences in the armed struggle" were discussed.

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